

EGREMONT GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES March 12, 2019

The meeting opened at 4:10. Present were Marj Wexler (Chair), Juliette Haas, Pat Konecky, Corinna Barnard.

Minutes of the 01/15/19 meeting were approved.

Sustainability coordinator report/Juliette: CET has dropped its hazardous waste collection. Managers of various neighboring towns are working out the details of how to take over. Instead of six collections in total, it will probably be two comprehensives a year, with no mini collections. Under CET, towns paid yearly and then an additional volume fee after event. Per-town fees, paid ahead of time will likely be the new system.

Juliette's mercury thermostat collection totaled seven.

Juliette said Egremont will not be applying for the Green Communities grant in 2019, but will instead be looking ahead to 2020.

Emily and Pat reported on what they'd dug up about electric-vehicle, or EV, charging stations. Pat said they found grants through National Grid (NG), VW and the Dept. of Energy Resources. NG's grant would help fund the infrastructure required to bring power to site. VW has a program that will help install a station, but Emily said it only applied to a Level 2 charger (which take hours, versus the fast, Level 3 charger, which in half an hour provide enough energy to move 90 miles).

Emily brought materials from NG about installing an EV charging station and the different entities involved. NG will conduct a site assessment. The owner or vendor will pick the site and qualified equipment. NG will install the electrical infrastructure. A vendor will install the charging station. The owner will be responsible for ongoing maintenance and electricity costs. The owner will take care of billing customers. (Pat, however, said she is billed by the vendor, which is probably a standard arrangement.) NG said a town, or a private company may own a station. The owner pays for insurance. If the station is on town land the public will have access, it's not just for town vehicles. The owner maintains the charging station, buys a service contract, probably from the vendor.

Pat said the VW state grant seemed like the one for which Egremont was most likely to qualify, but it's a Level 2. There was a discussion of who uses Level 2 charging stations. Emily said they are appropriate for office parking lots, where cars could be charged during the workday, or apartment complexes where they could charge overnight. Level 3, by contrast, provides enough charge in half an hour to move 90 miles. There was a discussion of why Level 2s are so widespread and Pat theorized it could be people with hybrids, not EVs.

Emily said since Egremont residents will charge at home and the town does not offer a lot of restaurants, an EV charging station, in general—whatever the speed—is not a great fit for Egremont. She said Great Barrington, with higher-traffic, is more suitable.

Upshot: the group decided it did not make sense for Egremont to pursue an EV charging station given Pat and Emily's findings.

Berkshire Edge — Corinna raised the idea of recrafting a letter about EVs written by Mary Stucklen that Pat had circulated. The idea was approved and that column will run next. Another idea is packaging-free shopping.

April 27 is the roadside cleanup day. Juliette suggested marketing the pizza party dinner as a time to discuss home energy efficiency, which is the Green Committee's primary agenda, as agreed in a recent meeting.

Recycling/Juliette: In light of the nationwide difficulties with recycling, with markets way down, the 90 cities and towns in western Massachusetts that use the Springfield MRF are lucky because the MRF continues to accept materials. However, Egremont has only one more year on its contract. And the MRF, which is on state land and is run by a private contractor, has an RFP out for new managers. After May 31 the candidates to manage the next 10-year contract will be known. Juliette said that when the contract expires the town could expect to start paying a tonnage fee.

April 19, at 7pm the Egremont Agricultural Commission is holding a pollinator talk and Juliette agreed to use funds to which she, as sustainability coordinate, has access, to provide \$50 toward the venue, which will be the new Greenagers' location in what was formerly the Appalachian Mountain Club building, on Rte. 41/Undermountain Road.

Pat described her initial experience with a group in Great Barrington that is working to improve mass transportation. After her column in the Berkshire Edge on activism on climate change she received an email, via the Egremont Green Committee email, egremont.green@gmail.com, from Tate Coleman, who is doing user surveys and has generated new routes that would enhance efficient and frequency with the existing system.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 9 at 4pm.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20.
Submitted by Corinna Barnard